

Problem-Solution Essay

Directions: Evaluate a problem-solution essay using the table below. For each element of the essay, mark a score from 1–3 indicating “Strong,” “Average,” or “Weak.”

	3 (Strong)	2 (Average)	1 (Weak)
Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thesis statement is focused and presents the problem and proposed solution(s).• Writer explains causes and effects of the problem.• Details and examples support the solution(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thesis statement presents the problem but is too broad or too narrow.• Writer explains some causes and effects of the problem.• Details and examples support most key ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thesis statement is unclear or missing.• Writer does not explain causes and effects of the problem.• Details and examples are not relevant or too scarce.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction presents significance of the problem and draws the reader in.• Transitions clearly show how ideas connect.• Organization is logical and consistent.• Conclusion summarizes ideas and makes a call to action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction presents significance of the problem but does not draw the reader in.• Most transitions work, but more are needed.• Organization shows logic but is inconsistent.• Conclusion simply summarizes ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction does not clearly set up what the essay is about.• Essay lacks an identifiable conclusion.• Writer uses few or no transitions.• Organization is random or disjointed.
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tone and voice suit purpose and audience.• Writing reflects active engagement with topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tone and voice suit purpose and audience but seem flat or direct.• Writing engages topic inconsistently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tone and voice do not suit purpose or audience.• Writing lacks an engaging voice.
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words are specific, accurate, and precise.• Well-chosen words and phrases create memorable descriptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words are adequate and mostly correct.• Familiar words and phrases rarely capture the reader’s imagination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocabulary choice is limited or vague.• Word choice does not help reader understand problem and solutions.
Sentence Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentences vary in length and structure.• Sentence beginnings are varied.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentence length and structure vary a little.• Sentence beginnings have some variety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentences do not vary in length and structure.• Many sentences begin the same way.
Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spelling and punctuation are correct.• Grammar and usage are correct.• Paragraphing reinforces organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spelling and punctuation are uneven.• Grammar and usage are not always correct.• Paragraphing is sometimes inconsistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spelling and punctuation are often wrong.• Many grammar and usage errors are present.• Paragraphing is missing or irregular.